

III. Claims

Claims 1-27 are currently pending. Claims 1, 9, 12, 20, 22 and 23-27 are amended as set forth below. This version and listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims.

1. (currently amended) A computer implemented method for rewarding connection time between a client and a network resource, comprising the steps of:
- _____receiving identification information relating to an individual using a client from the client upon the establishment of a connection between the client and the network resource through a network;
- _____correlating received identification information with stored identification information;
- _____commencing an accumulation session associated with said established connection between the client and the network resource;
- _____monitoring the time of the accumulation session;
- _____calculating an award of credits specific to the accumulation session where the credits are awarded, based at least in part on increasing amounts of credits based upon increasing the duration of the accumulation session; and
- _____ awarding said credits.
2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the individual is prompted to respond in a predetermined manner during an accumulation session of the individual within a selected period of time to avoid termination of the accumulation session.
3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the individual is presented with a prompt during an accumulation session, first, second and third responses to said prompt being available, the first response resulting in termination of the accumulation session, and

wherein, upon calculation of credits, the credits earned if the second response is received are less than the credits earned if the third response is received.

4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the individual is prompted to respond in a predetermined manner during the accumulation session, and the response time from the time when a prompt is made to the time when the predetermined response is received is recorded.
5. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein the recorded response time is employed in the calculation of a measure of attentiveness, said attentiveness measure being used in the calculation of the credits that are awarded.
6. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein if the individual responds within a selected period of time, the time from the prompt to the receipt of a response is recorded.
7. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein an icon is presented on a screen to the individual at all times, the individual being prompted by a change in appearance of the icon.
8. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein the icon is a traffic light having green, yellow and red lights, each having an illuminated state and an off state, an illuminated green light denoting an accumulation session in progress with no requirement to respond, and an illuminated yellow light denoting an accumulation session in progress with a requirement to respond within a pre-determined period of time and an illuminated red light denoting the termination of a credit accumulation session.

9. (currently amended) The method of claim 4, wherein said steps of prompting, receiving responses and the recording are is repeated, the recorded time being used to calculate a measure of attentiveness that is unique to the individual.
10. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein credits are calculated based in part on content viewed by the individual during the accumulation session.
11. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein credits are calculated based in part on the length of time taken by the individual to respond to prompts during previous credit accumulation sessions.
- A1 12. (currently amended) A computer implemented method of providing a rewards program based upon the connection time between a client and a network resource, comprising the steps of:
- _____ enrolling an individual in a rewards program by obtaining individual profile information and storing said information at a program administrator location;
 - _____ requiring identification of the individual once a connection to a participant resource has been established through a network, the identification being based on said stored information;
 - _____ commencing an accumulation session following the identification of the individual, said accumulation session being associated with said established connection between the client and the network resource;
 - _____ recording information, including at least duration of the accumulation session, at a participant's location during the accumulation session;
 - _____ forwarding said recorded information to a ~~the~~ program administrator;
 - _____ updating the stored individual information at the program administrator location based on said recorded information;

_____calculating the total amount of credit earned as a result of the accumulation session based on the stored individual information and a formula selected by the participant; ~~and~~
_____ awarding said earned credit; and
_____permitting redemption of the earned credits for items of value.

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13. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein the participant provides one or more items in redemption of the credit accumulated during connection to said participant's resource.
 14. (original) The method of claim 13, wherein the item provided in redemption is presented in the form of a certificate demonstrating credit for meeting applicable time based attendance requirements.
 15. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein a threshold value of credit is required to redeem a reward, and the program administrator notifies the individual when the threshold is achieved.
 16. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein a threshold value of credit is required to redeem an award, and the individual is notified during an accumulation session of the number of additional credits required in addition to those currently held by the individual in order to reach an applicable credit threshold.
 17. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein credit redemption is permitted at a resource maintained by the program administrator for credits earned at any participant resource.

18. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein credit redemption is permitted at the resource of a participant including the redemption of credits earned at resources of other participants.
19. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein redemption may be initiated by an individual employing telephone, e-mail or postal mail.
20. (currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein, after a purchase process at a participant resource had been abandoned by the individual, ~~contact~~ contact is achieved with the individual, and the individual is notified of the opportunity to obtain credit by participating in an accumulation session.
21. (original) The method of claim 20, wherein, during said accumulation session additional opportunities to earn credits are made conditioned on completion of the purchase process.
22. (currently amended) A system for rewarding connection time between a client and a network resource, comprising:
_____ means for receiving from a client, identification information following the establishment of a connection between the client and the network resource;
_____ means for correlating received identification information with stored identification information;
_____ means for commencing an ~~credit~~ accumulation session associated with said established connection between the client and the network resource;
_____ means for monitoring the time of the accumulation session; and
_____ means for calculating credits awarded specific to the accumulation session, based at least in part on increasing amounts of credits awarded based on increasing the length of time of the accumulation session.

23. (currently amended) In a computer implemented method for rewarding attention by an individual on a client device to content at a resource, the client device and the resource being connected over a network, the method comprising the steps of:
- _____ during providing of content from the resource to the client over the network,
providing a prompt that requires a response from the individual at the client resource;
_____ receiving a response from the individual through the network;
_____ recording the time that elapsed from the prompt to the response;
_____ calculating the award of credits to the individual based at least in part on the recorded time that elapsed, a greater period of time elapsed resulting in a lower award of credits; and
_____ awarding the credits.
24. (currently amended) In a computer implemented method for rewarding quality attention provided by an individual to content available at a network resource and provided to on a client device, the client device and the network resource being connected over a network, the method comprising the steps of:
- _____ calculating an award based at least in part on a quality measure of individual attention, the quality measure of individual attention being unique to the individual, and being based in part on the time elapsed between one or more prompts provided to the individual while a connection is established between a client device and the network a resource for receiving the content, and a response received by the network resource from the individual, a greater time elapsed resulting in a lower award; and
_____ awarding the calculated award.
25. (currently amended) A system for providing a rewards program based upon the connection time between a client and a network resource, comprising:

_____ means for enrolling an individual in a rewards program by obtaining individual profile information and storing said information at a program administrator location based on said recorded information;

_____ means for identifying the individual upon connection to a participant resource, the identification being based on said stored information;

_____ means for commencing an accumulation session following identification of the individual, said accumulation session being associated with said established connection to said participant resource;

_____ means for recording information, including at least the duration of the accumulation session, at a participant's location where the accumulation session takes place;

_____ means for forwarding recorded information to ~~the~~ a program administrator;

_____ means for updating the stored individual information at the administrator location;

_____ means for calculating the credits earned as a result of the accumulation session based on the stored individual information and a formula selected by the participant; and

_____ means to permit the redemption of the earned credits for items of value.

26. (currently amended) A storage medium having stored therein a plurality of instructions, wherein the plurality of instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform the steps of:

_____ receiving from a client, identification information following the establishment of a connection between the client and ~~a~~ the network resource;

_____ correlating received identification information with stored identification information;

_____ commencing an accumulation session associated with the established connection between the client and the network resource;

_____ monitoring the length of time of the accumulation session; and

_____ calculating credits awarded specific to the accumulation session, based at least in part on awarding credits in increased amounts with increasing the length of the accumulation session.

27. (currently amended) A storage medium having stored therein a plurality of instructions, wherein the plurality of instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform the steps of:

A | _____ enrolling an individual in a rewards program by obtaining individual profile information and storing said information;

_____ requiring identification of the individual after establishing a connection from a client to a participant resource through a network, the identification being based on said stored information;

_____ commencing an accumulation session following identification of the individual, said accumulation session being associated with the established connection from said client to said participant resource;

_____ receiving recorded information, including at least duration of an accumulation session between an enrolled individual and a participant's resource;

_____ updating the stored individual information based on said recorded information;

_____ calculating credit earned by the individual as a result of the accumulation session based on the stored individual information and a formula selected by the participant; and

_____ debiting the amount of credit held by the individual based on redemption information.
